

Naturalness

Four ways, totaling 2.7 miles in length, extend into the WSA from outside the boundaries. Frequent fires prevent potential natural vegetation that is typical of the Sagebrush-Steppe type from becoming established in the WSA.

Solitude

Outside sights and sounds include a mainline railroad, a 500 kv transmission line, traffic on exterior boundary roads, and agricultural activities on adjacent farmland. Most of these sights and sounds have a minor adverse impact on opportunities for solitude in the southern part of the WSA.

Primitive Recreation

Opportunities for desert hiking and camping are found throughout the WSA. The WSA is not large enough to offer extensive hikes, but day hikes and overnight outings could be accommodated in the unit.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

Supplemental features include the lava flows which provide examples of volcanism on the Snake River Plain. Also present is a burrowing owl nesting site.

Sand Butte WSA (57-8)

Size

This WSA includes 20,792 acres of BLM-administered public land plus 1,280 acres of State land inholdings.

Naturalness

Minor imprints on naturalness in the WSA include two ways (total length is 1.8 miles), 6.75 miles of fence, and several small (less than 10 acres) patches of crested wheat seedings.

Solitude

Excellent opportunities for solitude exist in the WSA. The vista from Sand Butte enhances solitude. Infrequent traffic on boundary roads has a minor adverse impact on solitude in the WSA.

Primitive Recreation

Primitive recreation opportunities in the WSA center on the rugged lava formations, desert terrain, and Sagebrush-Steppe grasslands. Primitive hiking, camping, and hunting opportunities are outstanding.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

The primary supplemental wilderness value in the WSA is the geological significance of Sand Butte. With its steep, heavily-stratified crater walls and deep symmetrical crater bowl, Sand Butte stands out as an unusual formation among the more common volcanic cones of the Snake River Plain. Large stands of native grasses within the area add to the WSA's natural values. A nesting site for a pair of ferruginous hawks exists within the WSA.

Raven's Eye WSA (57-10)

Size

This WSA includes 67,110 acres of BLM-administered public land plus 1,920 acres of State land inholdings.

Naturalness

Minor imprints on naturalness within the WSA include six ways (totaling 15.6 miles in length), three fences (totaling 6 miles), and numerous small (less than 10 acres in size) patches of crested wheat seeding.

Solitude

Excellent opportunities for solitude are found throughout the WSA. Outside sights and sounds from light to moderate traffic on boundary roads, activity on adjacent agricultural lands, and traffic on U.S. Highway 93 (which passes close to the west boundary) have minor adverse impacts on solitude.

Primitive Recreation

The diversity of primitive recreation opportunities in the WSA center on the rugged volcanic features and extreme desert environment of the area. Primitive hiking, camping, and hunting opportunities of outstanding quality are offered by the unit. Spelunking, photography, and nature study are other high quality recreational opportunities offered by the WSA.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

The ecological significance of the recent and older lava flows is the primary supplemental value in the WSA. The Craters of the Moon Lava Flow in the WSA exhibits many distinctive features that illustrate volcanic processes. Lava cascades, pressure ridges, lava blisters, and other features are found throughout the WSA. A rift feature connects Broken Top Butte and Sand Butte.

Some extensive prehistoric sites are known to exist in the WSA. Paleontological sites have been discovered in lava tubes.

Little Deer WSA (57-11)

Size

This WSA includes 33,531 acrs of BLM-administered public land plus 640 acres of State land inholdings.

Naturalness

Minor imprints on naturalness in the WSA include six ways with a total length of 5.1 miles.

Solitude

Opportunities for solitude are excellent in this WSA. Outside sights and sounds from moderate to infrequent traffic on boundary roads have a minor adverse impact on solitude values.

Primitive Recreation

Primitive recreation opportunities in the WSA center on the rugged recent volcanic flows that occupy most of the WSA. Primitive camping and hiking opportunities are very challenging in the rugged terrain of this WSA. Most of the lava flows are of the aa type and have a broken clinkery character that is extremely difficult to negotiate on foot. For this reason, the primitive recreation opportunities in this WSA are not as high as they would be if a more diverse selection of lava terrain were available.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

The geological significance of recent lava flows is the primary supplemental value in the WSA. A portion of the Craters of the Moon Lava Flow is

located in the WSA. This flow was created by a volcanic eruption that may have occurred within the last four thousand years. The flow exhibits many distinctive features that illustrate volcanic processes such as lava cascades, blisters, and pressure ridges.

Bear Den Butte WSA (57-14)

Size

This WSA includes 9,700 acres of BLM-administered public land with no State or private land inholdings.

Naturalness

Minor imprints of man on naturalness within the WSA include two ways with a total length of 1.5 miles and 100 feet of fence.

Solitude

Excellent opportunities for solitude are found in this WSA. Outside sights and sounds from infrequent traffic on boundary roads have a minor adverse impact on solitude values in some portions of the WSA.

Primitive Recreation

The diversity of recreation opportunities available in the WSA center on rugged volcanic features and the extreme desert environment of the area. Primitive hiking, camping and hunting opportunities of outstanding quality are offered by the unit. These opportunities are limited to some degree by the small size of the WSA, which is too small to support extended hikes or trips, but is big enough for day hikes and overnight excursions. An additional drawback for recreation is that the lava flow that occupies 59 percent of the unit is all aa lava and is extremely difficult to negotiate on foot.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

The lava flow in the WSA exhibits several distinctive features that illustrate volcanic processes.

Shoshone WSA (59-7)

Size

The WSA includes 6,914 acres of BLM-administered public land with no State or private land inholdings.

Naturalness

No human imprints inside the WSA were identified in the inventory.

Solitude

Although there is relatively little variation in elevation, the WSA is completely covered with a recent lava flow. Pressure ridges, lava blisters, and subsidence craters create a very uneven surface that provides plenty of solitude. There is very little vegetation in the unit. What does exist provides no screening.

Outside sights and sounds include sounds from an adjacent railroad, activity on agricultural lands along the south boundary, and frequent traffic along the west boundary road. These sights and sounds have a moderate impact on solitude values in the southern and western part of the WSA.

Primitive Recreation

Primitive recreation opportunities center on the rugged lava landscape within the WSA. Primitive hiking, camping, and hunting opportunities of

outstanding quality are offered by the unit. These are tempered to some extent by the small size of the WSA which eliminates the possibility of extended hikes and limits most use to day use or overnight excursions.

Optional Wilderness Characteristics

The primary supplemental value in the WSA is the recent lava flow that covers the whole unit. The lava flow exhibits several features that illustrate volcanic processes.

NATURAL HISTORY

Several features on public lands in the Monument Planning Area demonstrate important aspects of the natural history of the Snake River Plain. The BLM and other agencies have recognized the value of these features and, in some cases, have established special designations or guidance for managing these areas. Two designated natural history areas, the Grasslands Kipuka Natural Area and the Great Rift National Natural Landmark, are partially or completely within the Monument Planning Area. However, their management has already been addressed in other land use management plans. Therefore, management of these areas will not be commented on in this plan.

The proposed Dry Cataracts National Natural Landmark is located three to six miles northeast of Twin Falls in Jerome and Twin Falls counties. Only the portion of the area in Jerome County lies within the Monument Planning Area (see Map 8). The 3,000-acre area proposed for landmark status contains geological features that dramatically illustrate volcanic processes that formed the Snake River Plain, and the erosion processes of catastrophic floods left by the Bonneville Flood. The National Park Service conducted eligibility studies in 1973 (Jones 1973). In 1979, the area was recommended for National Natural Landmark status. Further action is pending formal agreement with the landowners involved.

In October 1983 a report was completed by the Idaho Natural Area Coordinating Committee recommending Vineyard Creek, which is within the Dry Cataracts Area, for research natural area designation (Caicco, Rabe, and Wellner 1983).

The proposed Box Canyon National Natural Landmark is located on the north side of the Snake River 7.75 miles southwest of Wendell (see Map 8). The proposed area contains 250 acres and is one of the few surviving relatively undisturbed box canyon or alcove ecosystems in the Snake River Plain aquifer

area. The area was initially proposed as a potential natural landmark by Robert Jones, a professor of geology at the University of Idaho, in 1973. Peter Bowler conducted a study (Bowler 1980) for the National Park Service in 1980 that evaluated the eligibility of the area for the National Natural Landmark Designation. The National Park Service has made no recommendation regarding the area.

Other natural history resources have been identified as Areas of Geologic Interest (AGI) (see Map 8). These areas have special geological features that require some type of management attention, but are not of national significance. All of the AGI in the Monument Planning Area involve lava tube caves. A cave inventory identified 29 caves in the area. Ten AGI contain caves that are in good condition with fragile cave formations or other phenomena. Six contain caves that are heavily used and may present hazards to the public.

The caves that are in good condition are those that are not well known. The better known caves have had all speleothems removed and graffiti is evident in all of them. Garbage is also a problem in those caves that are used frequently.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

In general, the planning area has produced cultural resources dating from about 15,000 years before present to recent historic sites related to trans-continental migration, gold mining, and the railroad. Significance of these sites range from National Register Sites such as Wilson Butte Cave, and those which may be eligible such as the Oregon Trail, Bonanza Bar, Cedar Fields area, and Devil's Corral, to very sparse lithic scatters and historic sheep camps which contain little interpretable information. Over 200 sites have been identified in the planning area with at least 25 percent on private land and the majority of sites located near the Snake River and its major tributaries, the Malad, Big and Little Wood rivers.

Within the planning area, there are several areas that are particularly sensitive to prehistoric resources (see Map 8). The most sensitive area is along the Snake River. From the banks of the Snake River to an arbitrary point about three miles from the bank, prehistoric sites are numerous. Sites may be found along the major tributaries such as the Big Wood, Little Wood, and Malad rivers, about one mile either side of these rivers. The high density of occupation in this area may be a combination of factors including topography, fish, game, and available edible plants. Occupation of these river sites is not uniform, but varies along the length.

In the upland areas, site density is low when compared to those areas associated with water courses, and site locations are not greatly predictable. Some sites do occur in caves, lava tubes, overhangs, and playas, but

not all such features contain sites. Open sites are far more frequent, but even less predictable and include lithic debris scatters with and without fire hearths, petroglyphs, and rock cairns, or a combination of any of these elements. The significance of all these upland sites depends on the amount of interpretable information contained in the site.

There are several historic trails within the planning area, however, none are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Those segments identified on the original survey documents are the "Emigrant Road," "the road from Shoshone to Starrs (sic) Ferry," "Boise to Kelton Road," "Bubbs Road," and "Road to Salmon Falls." There are only about 20 miles of the Emigrant Trail on Federal land whose condition varies from fair, meaning there has been limited subsequent use of the trail since the emigration; to poor, in that the trail has been succeeded by a major thoroughfare, improved county road, or is now in an area intensively used by off-road, farm, or ranch vehicles.

RECREATION

Recreation Opportunities

Many recreation opportunities exist within the planning area because of a variety of land uses, terrain, and resources. Four settings of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) characterizations have been identified in the area. The settings identified, with acreages, are: Semi-Primitive Motorized, 867,591; Rural, 538,215; Roaded Natural, 462,514; and Primitive, 191,120. Urban settings have not been identified as this setting is not relevant to land use planning of a natural resource administrative agency.

Since recreation activities correlate very closely with preferred settings, a brief characterization of settings and preferred opportunities within these settings is as follows.

1. Primitive Setting

Characteristics - Essentially a natural environment of fairly large size. Few restrictions or controls are present. Evidence of other users is low. Motorized use is essentially nonexistent.

Preferred Activities - Primitive hunting and fishing, nature study, hiking, tent camping, and horseback riding.

2. Semi-Primitive Motorized Setting

Characteristics - Predominantly a natural-appearing environment of moderate to large size. Subtle restrictions. Often evidence of other users. Motorized use is permitted.

Preferred Activities - Hunting and fishing assisted by motorized vehicles, off-road motorcycle and four-wheel drive use, and back-country camping.

3. Roaded Natural Setting

Characteristics - Predominantly a natural-appearing environment with moderate evidence of man's activity. Evidence of other users is common, but interaction is low to moderate. Conventional motorized use is provided for.

Preferred Activities - Hunting and fishing with easy access, off-road vehicle (ORV) use can be intensive, target practice, and horseback riding.

4. Rural Setting

Characteristics - Agricultural regions, sights and sounds of human use are readily evident.

Preferred Activities - Upland bird hunting, local ORV use, viewing scenery, and horseback riding.

Extensive Recreation Management

The planning area includes portions of two extensive Recreation Management Areas (RMAs), the Bennett Hills RMA and the Monument RMA. Extensive areas include all land not specifically included in "intensive" areas and comprise most of the planning area. Recreation activity is generally dispersed and no recreation facilities are provided on public lands.

All ROS settings found within the planning area are represented in "extensive" areas. Very diverse recreation opportunities are available within a short distance since the area includes resources such as the Snake River, extensive agricultural regions, high deserts and vast, rugged lava fields.

Pheasant hunting provides more visitor use days (VUDs) than any other activity in the planning area, with 77,000 VUDs annually. Other major activities include cold water fishing, dispersed recreation activities such as hiking, camping, and horseback riding, and hunting for Hungarian

partridge. Other hunting, motorized boating, ORV use, nature study, warm water fishing, float boating, and spelunking account for additional recreation use.

A potential ORV cross-country trail has been identified and extends from the Snake River Rim Recreation Management Area northeast to Bear Trap Cave.

Intensive Recreation Management

Three Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) have been identified within the planning area (see Map 13). They are Cedar Fields, Little Wood River, and the Snake River Rim. SRMAs are areas where recreation is recognized as a major resource use.

Most of the area within the SRMAs are classified as a Roaded Natural setting using ROS guidelines. The portion of the Snake River Rim area below the canyon rim has been determined to be a Semi-Primitive Motorized setting. These settings strongly influence the type of recreation use that occurs.

Cedar Fields lies along the Snake River below American Falls Dam. Major recreation uses of the area include motorcycle and four-wheel drive use, motorized and float boating, waterfowl hunting, and fishing for trophy sized trout. The Idaho department of Fish and Game has provided a boat ramp through a Recreation and Public Purposes Lease and Cooperative Agreement with the BLM. No other facilities are provided.

The Little Wood River area surrounds much of the lower Little Wood River under administration by the BLM. Fishing for trophy size brown and rainbow trout is the principal recreation use. Some motorized camping occurs. No facilities are provided.

The Snake River Rim area lies along the Snake River Canyon near Twin Falls. Use is greatly influenced by the area's proximity to Twin Falls. Heavy ORV use occurs above the canyon rim. Other uses occurring here include horseback riding, target shooting, and sightseeing. Use below the rim includes float boating and kayaking, hiking, fishing, and nature study. Devil's Corral is closed to ORV use and ORV use between the Devil's Corral road and the rim is limited to designated roads and trails. Management direction for the Snake River Rim area is provided by the Snake River Rim Recreation Area Management plan. This is the only area of the three SRMAs covered by a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP).

Visual Quality

Most of the planning area lies within the Columbia Plateau physiographic province, however, a small portion near American Falls lies within the Basin and Range physiographic province. Visual resources are evaluated on their scenic quality within the physiographic province.

Areas of greatest visual concern within the planning area include much of the land immediately adjacent to the Snake River and a strip of land along U.S. Highway 93 near Craters of the Moon National Monument. Land adjacent and to the north side of the Snake River below American Falls is very visible from Interstate 84 and Massacre Rocks State Park, which are south of the river and outside the planning area. Several prominent scars, created by ORVs, exist on south-facing hillsides visible from Massacre Rocks State Park and Interstate 84.

High scenic areas in the planning area are associated with rugged lava fields or the canyon along the Snake River. Other areas of somewhat lower scenic quality include farmland and rolling plains, vegetated with brush and grasses.

Vineyard Creek and Box Canyon possess unique scenic qualities. The combination of exceptional water clarity, abundant riparian vegetation, and isolation among the steep canyon walls of a box canyon or alcove setting are uncommon in the area.

SOILS

Soil Erosion

When averaged over the entire planning area, the present erosion situation is within acceptable levels. However, both wind and water erosion problems occur in some localized areas. Because of the relatively flat terrain and the coarse texture of the soils, particularly near the Snake and Little Wood rivers, wind erosion is a much greater problem than water erosion. Water erosion problems are confined mainly to the steeper slopes of buttes and breaks into the Snake River.

The major causes of erosion have been livestock grazing and grazing facilities, wildfires, fire suppression activities, ORV use, and agricultural development. Because of these activities, the soils in the area have been subjected to varying degrees of soil loss and accumulations, the net result being a general lessening of soil productivity in some areas and enhancement in others. Sedimentation occurs along the Snake and Little Wood rivers, but most of the area is internally drained. Sediments accumulate in closed basins and playas.

Soil erosion rates apparently were once much greater than at present. Aerial and ground photographs taken in the vicinity of Wendell and American Falls during the mid 1950s show vast areas with little or no vegetation cover and also show numerous active sand blows. Grazing use was much higher than at present, before being significantly reduced by adjudications in the late 1950s. As a result of these management changes, considerable vegetative cover has been gained and only scattered sand blows remain.

The average erosion rate is 4.8 tons/acre/year. Of the 1,178,989 acres in the planning area, only 37,463 acres have a severe erosion problem. About a quarter of these areas are associated with management facilities such as dirt roads or watering areas where livestock concentrations occur. The rest are scattered areas of erosion, active sand dunes, and water erosion areas. The occurrence of some of these sand blows varies in different years depending on the size and location of wildfires.

Soil Potentials

Potential

Most of the public lands in the planning area are considered marginal for agricultural development (see Maps 12 and 14). With the exception of map unit 18, most of the planning area is suited to ORV use and has a medium potential for livestock grazing. Map units 14 and 18 are considered unsuitable for agricultural development. However, a few areas in map unit 14 may have marginal potential. This unit is limited because of shallowness to rock.

Map units 2, 3, 4, 12, and 15 are considered suitable for development. However, these map units are mainly found on private cropland with only small acreages of undeveloped public land.

Map units 10, 13, 16, and 17 are considered marginal for development, but there are some flatter areas well suited to agricultural development.

The remaining map units are considered marginal for development. Soil problems such as droughtiness or depth to rock, erosion hazard either because of water erosion on steep slopes or wind erosion on sandy soils, and/or too much exposed lava limit the suitability of these soils for agriculture.

The agricultural suitability categories shown on Map 12 are based on the percentage of class II and III soils in each soil association as follows:

Suitable - greater than 50 percent class II and III.

Marginal - 20 to 50 percent class II and III.

Unsuitable - less than 20 percent class II and III.

Erosion Potential and Soil Productivity

The map units having high erosion potential (see Map 14) would be expected to have serious erosion problems under cultivation, unless careful management and conservation practices were used. Adjacent to and downwind from agricultural lands, sand dunes have formed and advanced across public lands reducing soil productivity. This has resulted from the abrasive effect of soil blowing and the smothering effect of deposited soil. Some of these dunes have stabilized; others are still active. Irrigation, in some areas with increased runoff and erosion, has led to a decrease in soil productivity by smothering the existing vegetation on public lands.

Surface disturbance, compaction, and loss of vegetative cover are the major causes of soil erosion in the planning area. The potential erosion from ORV use and livestock grazing can be quite high, especially on the steeper slopes and sandy soils in the planning area. These activities have caused some serious erosion problems in areas having high erosion potential.

Wildfires are a major cause of erosion in the planning area. This is a result of the damaging effects of the fire itself and the surface disturbance caused by suppression activities.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Leasable Minerals

Oil and Gas

The Shoshone District has authority over oil and gas rights beneath approximately 1,180,000 acres in the planning area. A total of 24,000 acres are currently under oil and gas lease. The planning area is considered to have some possibility for oil and gas production. However, no activity has taken place on the leases.

Geothermal

There are no geothermal leases in the planning area, however, a large area east of Carey, encompassing the Wapi and Craters lava flows, is considered to have some possibility for geothermal resources. To date, no geothermal resource development has occurred and exploration by major energy companies has proven unsatisfactory.

Locatable Minerals

The Snake River gold placers have been mined since the early 1860s. During the 1870s, flour gold was recovered in extensive operations along most of the river, which forms the southern boundary of the Monument Planning Area. This period saw a multitude of mining camps established with thousands of men winning gold from gravel bars. It has been reported by reliable sources that the highest gold values were found in the deposits in the vicinity of Rupert, American Falls, and south of Minidoka. Millions of yards of gravel were sluiced with an average value of \$.20/cubic yard (the equivalent of \$5.00/cubic yard with gold at \$500/ounce).

Today, the Snake River gold placers are largely operated on a recreational basis, however, a medium-sized placer mining operation exists on Bonanza Bar, southwest of American Falls. Other organizations are in the process of testing for mineable deposits in the area. The financial outcome of these ventures could greatly affect management of lands open to mineral entry which lie adjacent to the Snake River, as well as those lands containing ancient channels of the river. Mining of the Snake River gold has been recently proven to be commercially feasible by a gravel mining company currently operating at Grandview, Idaho.

Map 15 outlines a mining zone for Snake River gold. Lands lying within this zone are considered mineral in character.

The extraction of Snake River placer gold is a minor recreation activity at this time, but could be promoted into a major recreational use of accessible lands adjacent to the river.

Veneer-type lava is present in the planning area. The possibility exists that some deposits of this material could qualify as a locatable mineral.

Saleable Minerals

Saleable minerals in the planning area include common variety stone and various types of gravels, sand, and common borrow. Approximately 60

rights-of-way and free use permits exist in the planning area, as well as 10 community pits. A constant demand exists from both the public and various highway departments for additional materials. Map 15 shows the location of mineral material sites and possible mineral material deposits. Mineral materials in the area, especially gravel resources, are only available in small deposits and are therefore critical to many users.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

This RMP covers all or parts of seven Idaho Counties (Blaine, Butte, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Power). For purposes of this economic analysis, Blaine, Butte, Gooding, and Power counties have been excluded from the study area. Blaine County was excluded because the portions of the county within the planning area are largely lava flow and because the northern (Sun Valley) part of the county distorts the data for the southern part of the county. Butte, Gooding, and Power counties were excluded because of their limited involvement in terms of public land within the planning area.

Income

Total personal income in the study area was \$219.7 million in 1980 (Bureau of Economic Analysis [BEA] 1982). This amounts to a 6 percent increase since 1975 after taking into account the effects of inflation (Council of Economic Advisors 1982). This is a much slower rate of growth than the State's increase of 12 percent. The leading industries are agriculture (39 percent), manufacturing (21 percent), government (11 percent), services (7 percent), and retail trade (6 percent).

Employment

Total employment was 17,236 in 1980 (BEA 1982). This represents a 12 percent increase since 1975. This is slightly slower growth than the State experienced during this time (18 percent). The leading employers in the study area are agriculture (27 percent), manufacturing (19 percent), government (14 percent), retail trade (8 percent), and services (6 percent).

Multipliers

When a change occurs in a local economy, the initial effect spreads to other sectors of the economy (the multiplier effect). The total impact of any change is equal to the initial change plus the secondary change (as estimated by the multiplier). The multipliers used in the RMP area are those reported by the U.S. Water Resources Council in 1977. The multipliers are the Bureau of Economic Analysis area 152, which includes most of southcentral and southeast Idaho. The multipliers are for gross output which must be converted to earnings for comparative purposes. Multipliers and earnings/output ratios of interest are:

Industry	Gross Output Multiplier	Earnings to Gross Output Ratio
Vegetables, Sugar, Crops	2.496	0.3850
Meat Animals, Livestock	2.547	0.2447
Wholesale and Retail Trade	2.208	0.3969
Construction	1.948	0.2947
Services	2.217	0.3848

Source: U.S. Water Resources Council, 1977

Construction Industry

The construction industry would feel the impact of changes in spending levels for the installation of range improvements, as well as construction and maintenance of other types of facilities to accomplish the objectives of the RMP.

Recreation Industry

Changes in recreation use levels primarily impact the retail trade and services sectors of the local economy. Based on expenditures data for hunting and fishing in Idaho (USFWS 1980), it has been determined that the majority of any such impacts would be received by the retail trade industry (95-99 percent). For this reason, recreation-related economic impacts discussed in Chapter 4 will compare those impacts to the retail trade sector of the local economy.

Crop Agriculture Industry

In order to make impact comparisons, a typical agricultural entry (Desert Land or Carey Act) was analyzed to determine potential revenues associated with these land disposals. The entry analyzed was assumed to contain the following major characteristics:

Location: Minidoka County

Crops: Alfalfa, Barley, Potatoes

Farmable Acres: 210

Soil Types: 5 percent class II, 15 percent class III, 80 percent class IV

This analysis estimated net revenues of \$1,800 per entry annually, based on total revenues of \$109,300 and total costs of \$107,500. The crop enterprise budgets, summary table, and a listing of all assumptions made can be found in Appendix J. Any economic benefit from allowing agricultural entries would be regional in nature resulting from increased local income and employment from farm development.

Livestock Industry

To determine what impact the various alternatives would have on rancher income, ranch budgets were prepared. Budgets for four groups (three cattle, one sheep) were developed. The basic characteristics of each ranch budget group are shown in Table 3-1. The results of the budgeting are in Table 3-2. The full budgets, along with a complete description of the process used to develop the budgets, can be found in the Analysis of the Management Situation for the Monument RMP, on file in the Shoshone District Office.

Total returns above cash costs for all planning area permittees would be \$1,333,300.

TABLE 3-1

BASIC RANCH GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Group	Herd Size	Class	Number of Permittees	Five-Year Average Use
1	0 - 100	Cattle	63	11,622
2	101 - 250	Cattle	46	22,363
3	251 or more	Cattle	29	34,231
4	All	Sheep	27	29,676

TABLE 3-2

RANCH BUDGET SUMMARY

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Total Revenue	\$ 19,829	\$ 51,595	\$169,614	\$290,241
Total Costs	\$ 48,664	\$ 95,866	\$231,551	\$401,525
Cash Costs	17,664	49,016	158,051	262,725
Other Costs	31,000	46,850	73,500	138,800
Returns				
Above Cash Costs	\$ 2,165	\$ 2,579	\$ 11,563	\$ 27,516
Above Cash Costs and Family Labor	-7,835	-9,421	-2,937	12,516
To Total Investment	-19,835	-23,421	-20,437	-1,984
To Land	-22,235	-28,671	-34,237	-34,584

Permit Values

As early as 1925, it was recognized that the annual value of the Federal grazing privilege was being capitalized into rancher property. "It is argued that long use of the range in connection with the early settlement of agricultural lands has resulted in capitalizing the values of public pasturage as part of the value of the ranch..." (USDA 1925).

A report published by the Utah State University Experiment Station stated, "There was nothing illegal or unethical in the fact that grazing permits took on value; ranchers just reacted to an economic situation that was created by government policy. Permit values rose because ranchers who have grazing permits were capturing economic rents in the form of low cost grazing, i.e., the grazing fee and recognized non-fee costs did not equal the value of the grazing to ranches. Thus, the authorization to use the federal lands and the associated economic rents were capitalized into rancher-owned assets. This value could show up either as a permit value or as an increased value of the commensurate property." (Nielson and Workman 1971)

BLM's position on permit values is based on very explicit language in Section 3 of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which states "...so far as consistent with the purposes and provisions of this Act, grazing privileges recognized and acknowledged shall be adequately safeguarded, but the creation of a grazing district or the issuance of a permit pursuant to the provisions of this Act shall not create any right, title, interest, or state on or to the lands." Thus, any capitalized value associated with grazing permits has no legal basis, and, as a result a rancher has no compensation for loss of this value.

Magazine articles and research results have often been in conflict on the subject of permit values. Nevada rancher, Dean Rhoads, in an article in the New West Magazine stated that "...the forage right for a single cow on the public range now sells for anywhere from \$1,500 to \$3,000 in the Elko area." (Boly 1980) A survey done in New Mexico by ranch appraisers and credit officers placed the value of Forest Service permits at between \$944 and \$1,163 per animal unit, depending on the area in New Mexico. Bureau of Land Management values varied from \$667 to \$888 (Fowler and Gray 1980). On the other hand, a study in eastern Oregon found "...the inclusion of public grazing privileges were found to have no significant impact on the level of private grazing land sale prices" (Winter and Whittaker 1979).

Any impact to capital value of grazing permits is only realized at time of ranch sale. Also, the Bureau is currently studying the grazing fee formula. If this study results in setting grazing fees such that the fee plus non-fee costs equal the value of the grazing to the rancher, then all capital value will be eliminated.